

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for creating user groups in a network environment comprising the steps of:  
identifying at least one affinity among a plurality of user sessions, each session being associated with a different user; and  
responsive to said affinity identification, prompting a plurality of users of user sessions having the identified affinity to engage in communication.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of monitoring said plurality of user sessions.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said ~~initiating~~ prompting step further comprises the step of providing access to an interaction application for ~~said~~ at least two of said plurality of user sessions responsive to said identified affinity.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein said prompting step further comprises the step of establishing a communication pathway to facilitate real time communications between users associated with said at least two user sessions.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said step of establishing a communication pathway further comprises the step of opening at least one of a chat session, an instant messaging session, a newsgroup, and a shared application.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said identifying step includes the step of evaluating session cookies associated with said user sessions.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said identifying step includes the step of evaluating session objects associated with said user sessions.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein said session objects comprise at least one datum selected from the group consisting of a URL which has been accessed, an amount of time on-line, an item in a shopping cart, and a user identifier.
9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein said user identifier comprises at least one of a postal code, an area code, a city, a county, a state, a province, a country and a continent.
10. (Currently Amended) A method for creating user groups in a network environment comprising the steps of:  
identifying at least one affinity among a plurality of user sessions, each session being associated with a different user; and  
responsive to said affinity identification, presenting a user interface to at least one user.
11. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable storage having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:  
identifying at least one affinity among ~~at least two of said~~ a plurality of user sessions, each session being associated with a different user; and

responsive to said affinity identification, prompting a plurality of users of user sessions having the identified affinity to engage in communication.

12. (Original) The machine-readable storage of claim 11, further comprising the step of monitoring said plurality of user sessions.

13. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said initiating prompting step further comprises the step of providing access to an interaction application for ~~said~~ at least two of said plurality of user sessions responsive to said identified affinity.

14. (Original) The machine-readable storage of claim 13, wherein said prompting step further comprises the step of establishing a communication pathway to facilitate real time communications between users associated with said at least two user sessions.

15. (Original) The machine-readable storage of claim 14, wherein said step of establishing a communication pathway further comprises the step of opening at least one of a chat session, an instant messaging session, a newsgroup, and a shared application.

16. (Original) The machine-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said identifying step includes the step of evaluating session cookies associated with said user sessions.

17. (Original) The machine-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said identifying step includes the step of evaluating session objects associated with said user sessions.

18. (Original) The machine-readable storage of claim 17, wherein said session objects comprise at least one datum selected from the group consisting of a URL which has been accessed, an amount of time on-line, an item in a shopping cart, and a user identifier.

19. (Original) The machine-readable storage of claim 18, wherein said user identifier comprises at least one of a postal code, an area code, a city, a county, a state, a province, a country and a continent.

20. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable storage having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying at least one affinity among a plurality of user sessions, each session being associated with a different user; and

responsive to said affinity identification, presenting a user interface to at least one user.

21. (Currently Amended) A system for creating user groups in a network environment comprising:

means for identifying at least one affinity among at least two of ~~said~~ a plurality of user sessions, each session being associated with a different user; and

means for ~~initiating~~ prompting a plurality of users of user sessions having the identified affinity to engage in communication responsive to said affinity identification.

22. (Currently Amended) A system for creating user groups in a network environment comprising:

means for identifying at least one affinity among a plurality of user sessions, each session being associated with a different user; and

means for presenting a user interface to at least one user responsive to said affinity identification.